

Magruder House
Bladensburg, Md.

Bladensburg, Md.

MD
HABS No. 616
HABS
MD.
17- BLAD
3.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Washington, D.C.

Historic American Buildings Survey
Delos H. Smith, District Officer
1707 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D. C.

Addendum To

Magruder House
Bladensburg Road
Prince George's County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-616

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MD,
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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Addendum To:
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(Hilleary-Magruder House)
4703 Annapolis Road
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PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MAGRUDER HOUSE
(Hilleary-Magruder House)

HABS NO. MD-616

Location: 4703 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, Prince George's County, Maryland

Present Owner: Prince George's Heritage, Inc., 7606 Woodyard Road, Clinton, Maryland 20735

Present Occupant: Millard T. Charlton & Associates, Chartered; Certified Public Accountants

Present Use: restored and adapted for use as offices

Significance: The Hilleary-Magruder House is the only extant stone house executed in the Tidewater style in Prince George's County. A mid-18th century, one-and-a-half story, stone gambrel-roof structure, it reflects residential forms of the early settlement period in the county. It was most likely one of the earliest extant residences of substantial construction in Prince George's, as opposed to the less durable wood-frame structures typical of periods of early settlement.

It appeared in Bladensburg at about the same time that the town was established by the General Assembly of Maryland in an effort to encourage trade and commerce. It is also significant as one of only four structures existing from pre-Revolutionary War Bladensburg (the other three are Bostwick-HABS NO. MD-616, the Market Master's house and Washington Tavern). Historically, the house is connected with prominent Prince George's personages. It was also reportedly visited by George Washington (1787), and British troops during the battle of Bladensburg.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The house was built 1743-1746. William Hilleary purchased lot #32 from the Bladensburg Town Commissioners in 1743. According to an entry in the Record Book of the Town of Bladensburg in 1746, Hilleary

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had in fact complied with local law in building a house with a minimum of 400 square feet, with a masonry chimney (Microfilm M-265, 1742-1836, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland, pp. 4 & 7).

2. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title. Reference is to the Prince George's County Land Records, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro (unless otherwise specified).

- 1783 Record Book of the Town of Bladensburg, March 5, 1743 (microfilm #265, Hall of Records, Annapolis).
 Bladensburg Town Commissioners
 To
 William Hilleary
 Lot #32, Town of Bladensburg
- 1764 Deed December 21, 1764, TT/339
 William Hilleary
 To
 Richard Henderson
- 1793 Deed of 26 October 1793 not recorded,
 reference in JRM #10/69.
 Richard Henderson
 To
 David Ross
- 1799 Deed August 4, 1799, JRM #7/264
 David Ross
 To
 William Steuart
- 1803 Deed July 4, 1803, JMR #10/69
 William Steuart
 To
 Dr. Alexander Mitchell
- 1804 Dr. Alexander Mitchell's heirs to Leonard Deakins, Deed not found.
- 1835 Deed November 21, 1835, AB #10/150
 Benjamin Walsh
 To
 Christopher C. Hyatt

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1836 Deed January 16, 1836, AB #10/269
Christopher C. Hyatt
To
Howarton Cross

1847 Deed January 21, 1847, JBB #4/798
Howarton Cross
To
William Draine

1849 Deed January 3, 1849, JBB #5/508
William Draine
To
W.C. Harris

1853 Dionysius Sheriff to James T. Clarke, February
12, 1853, ON #1/291

1853 Deed May 17, 1853, ON #1/371
James T. Clarke
To
Dr. Archibald S. Magruder

? Magruder heirs to Anna Loffler (deed not
found)

1918 Deed September 1, 1918, 137/449
Anna Loffler
To
Baxter Denney

1940 Deed August 15, 1940, 570/355
Baxter Denney
To
Guisseppe Guliotta

1954 November 30, 1954, condemned under Maryland
State Law #467

1979 Deed March 19, 1979, 5071/48
State of Maryland
To
Prince George's Heritage, Inc.

3. Original plans and construction: It is known from the Record Book of the Town of Bladensburg that the house was at least 400 square feet and had a masonry chimney. The

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1798 Federal Direct Tax describes it as a stone dwelling house, one story and a half high, 43' x 30', with seven windows 5'3" x 2' 4" and six other windows (along with a log wash house, frame milk house, stone meat house, frame stable and shed).

4. Alterations and additions: The Hilleary-Magruder House underwent extensive restoration work in 1981-82 under the direction of restoration architect James Thomas Wollon, Jr., and approved by Prince George's Heritage, Inc. During that time, replacement of moldings, mantels and other interior finish took place, using the pieces of original fabric that were found in various rooms throughout the house. In the southwest conference room, the plaster cornice was retained but new chair rail, baseboards and hearth were installed and a new (although antique) mantel was added. In the southeast room, chair rail from the rear wall and baseboard from the fireplace wall were retained and duplicated for the other walls. The northeast room received new chair rail and mantel (antique). The northwest room's fireplace was reopened and the hearth reconstructed and the chair rail found on the inside wall was duplicated on the other walls. All the fireplaces were relined with terra cotta flue liners and the brick face stuccoed. The stair and landing had to be rebuilt, and a new newel post added (existing balustrade used).

On the exterior, the old stucco was removed, the mortar joints repointed, broken stones replaced and the walls re-stuccoed. A new shingle roof was applied. At the front elevation, the existing porch was removed and the current one added on the existing foundation, new crown molding was installed in the cornice, new basement windows installed and the dormers restored. At the south rear, the existing door and frame on the right side was removed and the brick arch reconstructed, and a new window added to the side of it. The deteriorating cornice was also replaced. At the east side, new cornice returns and fascia were installed and a new porch and handicapped access. On both the east and west sides the existing stone infill in former doorways was to remain. (All the above as stated by the architect's plans for restoration).

B. Historical Context:

Bladensburg was founded by an act of the General Assembly of Maryland in 1742 in an effort to encourage trade and commerce through the establishment of commercial town centers. Thus, the Hilleary-Magruder House, built ca. 1742, must have been one of the first residences constructed in the newly established town. Bladensburg's location along the Anacostia River (infilled with silt and thus unnavigable since the mid-19th century) must have influenced its selection as a town site. Because tobacco was the basis of the county's economy, shipping ports were important. In fact, Bladensburg became one of the most active ports in Maryland, and the site of one of Prince George's County's original seven tobacco warehouses and inspection stations, beginning in 1747. Much of the tobacco exported--the county's primary agricultural product-- would have gone through Bladensburg. Bladensburg's growth can also be attributed to the fact that two heavily traveled trade roads went through it.

As stipulated by the Bladensburg Town Commissioners, property owners were required to erect a substantial house covering a minimum of 400 square feet, with one chimney of either brick or stone, within eighteen months of purchasing a lot. By June of 1746 only eighteen lots had met the requirements, including the Hilleary (Magruder) house (Hienton, p. 138). The Town Commissioners conveyed lot #32 to William Hilleary in March of 1743. The Town Record Book in 1746 notes that Hilleary had in fact complied with the minimum building requirements.

In 1764 Hilleary sold the property to Richard Henderson, a prominent Bladensburg merchant and land speculator. Henderson also served as a County Justice, 1770-74, 1777-79 (Van Horn, p. 140 & 175). Henderson had married Sarah Brice, daughter of John Brice, Esq. of Annapolis on November 19, 1761 (Ibid., p. 112). According to George Washington's diary, he dined at Richard Henderson's in Bladensburg, May 9, 1787. Henderson was also partners with David Ross in a business on Antietam Creek, known as the Frederick Forge. Ross was also his Henderson's brother-in-law, having married his wife's sister.

In 1793 Henderson sold the house to his nephew, Dr. David Ross, Jr. Dr. Ross, as well as being a surgeon, served

as a Town Commissioner from 1750-59 and as a Justice of the County Court. Ross sold the property in 1799 and it passed through numerous hands. During the 1814 invasion of British troops in the battle of Bladensburg, the Magruder house was said to have been used as a hospital (Nat'l. Register nomination). It was the home of Dr. Archibald Magruder and family for many years, beginning in 1859 until his death in 1903. It was condemned by the State Highway Commission in 1954, as part of the Rt. 201 project which created a clover leaf adjacent to the house. After this time the house fell into disrepair. It was used as an antique shop until 1979 when the property was conveyed to Prince George's Heritage, Inc. (Deed 5071:48). Restoration and adaption to office space occurred in 1982.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

a. Architectural character: The Hilleary-Magruder house is one of a very few extant early residences of this period or Tidewater styling. It is a one-and-a-half story gambrel roof, dormered residence, the only (extant) one in the county executed in stone.

b. Condition of the fabric: Having been completely restored in recent years, the house is in excellent condition. Its original fabric, configuration and plan have been retained (or reconstructed), although adaptations for office use have been made.

B. Description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The house has a rectangular configuration (approximately 43' x 30'), being two rooms wide and two rooms deep. It is a one-and-a-half-story, dormered structure with an attic and a full basement. It has a five-bay facade with the entry to the center (former entries to the sides were infilled, although there is a doorway to the rear of the east side). It has a gambrel roof and interior chimneys at each gable end.

2. Foundations: The house rests on a stone foundation which, like the walls, has been stuccoed on the exterior.

3. Walls: The walls are of (presumably rubble) stone covered with stucco.

4. Structural system, framing: The house is constructed of load-bearing stone walls. There are large relieving arches in the basement which support the partition walls and smaller arches under the fireplaces. The roof truss system is of hand-hewn oak timbers, the rafters being pegged and reinforced with cross bracing.

5. Porches: The gable front entry porch is a reconstruction of what the architect presumed originally existed. It is longer than it is wide and is supported by three, 4" x 4" chamfered posts to each side. It has a plain balustrade with 4" x 5" newel post with a half-rounded top. Beneath the porch is a vaulted brick foundation (presumably used as a basement wine cellar). There is an entry porch at the east side doorway. It has a shed roof supported by 4" x 4" chamfered posts. It has a plain board (3-tiered) railing with steps to the side.

6. Chimneys: At the west gable end is an interior chimney. It has a narrow rectangular brick stack with a vaulted chimney cap. The east gable end chimney is an exterior, composition masonry chimney (stone base, brick stack), also with a vaulted cap.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The front entry has a six-panel door with a plain board surround with a simple architrave trim (any lintel that may exist is covered by the entry porch). There are two doorways to the rear, at the basement level. Both are set in a low-arched doorway with brick lintel. To the west side is a vertical board door with a plain board surround with a simple bead along the interior edge. The east side doorway probably accommodated double doors originally but now has a sliding glass door. The fourth doorway is to the back of the east side and has a six-panel door, like that on the front, and an arched wood lintel and simple architrave trim.

b. Windows: The typical window, as appears on the first-story facade and rear (there are no windows at the side elevations), is a nine-over-nine-light-sash window with a simple architrave surround and

arched brick lintel. In the dormers, front and rear, are six-over-six-light-sash windows. At the basement level at the front elevation are four, four-light basement windows, two to each side with arched brick lintels. At both gable ends are two small two-light fixed windows, one to either side of the chimney block. At the basement level of the rear elevation, at the west end, there is a window to either side of the doorway, both with arched brick lintels. At the far west end is a six-over-six-light-sash window, the other is a six-over-one-light-sash window. At the far east end is a small four-light window with arched brick lintel (as appear on the front at basement level).

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The house has a gambrel roof covered with wooden shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: The house has a box cornice with crown molding in the eaves. Below the box cornice is a frieze board with a bead at the end, and above, where the frieze meets the soffit, crown molding appears again.

c. Dormers: There are three gable-front dormers at both the front and rear. The gable front forms a simple pediment with narrow crown molding. The six-over-six-light-sash windows are surrounded with a plain, stepped trim. The side walls are wide boards on a diagonal and the roof is covered with wooden shingles.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The house enters into a roughly-square stairhall with the stairway along the north front and west walls. To the west of the stairhall, entered underneath it, is a small room (known as the doctor's office). Directly back from the front entry is a doorway into a large parlor, now used as a conference room. To the east side of the stairhall is a doorway into another room, with another, slightly smaller, room adjoining it to the rear.

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b. Second floor: The second floor follows the same basic plan. The area over the front entry is left open to the stairhall. There are two rooms to the west side, as on the first floor, and the room over the conference room is approximately the same except that a bathroom has been added from it (to the east side). The area over the small doctor's office is used for storage, and has an enclosed winder stairway to the attic.

c. Basement: Again, the basement follows the same floor plan. The stairway enters into a roughly square stairhall. To the west is a small room and straight back to the south is the largest room, with the original kitchen fireplace. Off this room, to the east, is another room which adjoins a smaller room to the north. Both these southeast and southwest rooms have outside entries. The northeast room has been partitioned and a kitchenette and bath added to the north, entered from the stairhall. Also entered from the stairhall, under the entry porch, is a brick vaulted storage area, formerly a wine cellar.

2. Stairway: The house has a partially closed-well (open at the top and bottom), three-flight stairway with winders. It begins along the north front wall with a balustrade along the first four steps. There is a window at the north wall which is protected by the balustrade which crosses it. Winder steps then turn the stairway up along the west wall, winding again along the south wall. From the upstairs stairhall, the stair is open with a balustrade to either side. There is a heavy, turned newel post with rounded cap. The intermediate posts located at the turning points match the turned balusters, and there is a molded handrail.

The two-run stair to the basement is enclosed except at the bottom. It is entered from underneath the main stair, runs along the west wall and then winds around to the north. There is also an enclosed two-run winder stairway to the attic.

3. Flooring: The floors throughout are currently covered with commercial-quality wall-to-wall carpeting.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: There are plaster walls throughout, with vertical wood paneling on the walls of

the stairway. There is a paneled wall behind the mantel in the conference room, and a plaster cornice. Chair rail is found throughout the first floor, consisting of a wide band with a bead at the top and bottom and a molded strip to the center. There are simple baseboards throughout, a wide board with a fillet atop it. Along the east wall of the stairhall is mounted a pegged board for hanging coats.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The doorways have a simple architrave surround. There are six-panel doors off the stairhall on the first floor and four-panel doors elsewhere. The doors are hung with HL hinges and have antique knobs and box locks. The door from the hall to the southeast room on the second floor has a sliding cat door cut into it. There are three-panel doors on the chimney closets on the first floor.

b. Windows: The windows on the first floor are set deep into the stone walls with splayed reveals with interior wood panel shutters folding into them.

6. Decorative features and trim: There are a number of decorative mantels that, although antique, are not original. There is a paneled wall in the parlor.

7. Hardware: As mentioned, the doors are hung with HL hinges and have antique knobs and box locks.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Hilleary-Magruder houses faces north onto Annapolis Road. Unfortunately, a highway overpass and off-ramp currently loop around the house. This is a distraction from its otherwise pleasing site which is unusually large compared to the other current town lots, with a grassy lawn with trees.

2. Historic landscape design: The house was part of the original layout of the town of Bladensburg, resting on lot #32 of the town plan. It was at one time surrounded by vintage buildings, but is currently one of the few remaining historic structures in the town.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings: HABS undertook drawings of the Magruder House, as it was then called, in 1979. The five sheets of drawings included floor plans (sheets 1 & 2), elevations (sheets 3 & 4) and a sectional (sheet 5). Architectural drawings necessary to the restoration were undertaken by architect James Wollon, Jr., in 1981-82.

B. Early views: HABS took a single photograph of Magruder house on April 30, 1936, John O. Brostrup, photographer. It is a view from the northwest elevation showing the front and side of the structure. The only significant change in the appearance from that time is the shed-roof entry porch which appears over the entry in 1936.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Cook, Margaret and Ruth Lockard, National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination form, William Hilleary House (or Magruder House), prepared April 1977.

Prince George's County Land Records (deeds as cited in text).

2. Secondary and published sources:

Hienton, Louise Joyce. Prince George's Heritage Baltimore, Maryland: Maryland Historical Society, Garamond/Pridemark Press, 1972.

Van Horn, R. Lee Out of the Past; Prince Georgians and Their Land. Riverdale, Maryland: Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976.

Virta, Alan. Prince George's County; A Pictorial History. Norfolk, Va.: Donning Company Publishers, 1984.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of the Hilleary-Magruder House was undertaken as part of a cooperative project between the Historic American Survey (HABS) and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission of behalf of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to document select sites throughout the county. A memorandum of agreement was signed on August of 1988 and the project, to span one year, was begun in January of 1989. Gail Rothrock, director and Susan G. Pearl, research historian, made the selection of sites. They also provided access to their historical research and information on file with the HPC, as well as their extensive knowledge of Prince George's County history. The large format photography was undertaken by HABS photographer Jack E. Boucher. The historical report was prepared by Catherine C. Lavoie, HABS historian who also accompanied the photographer into the field for on site investigations.